

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Community Focus Group: Southeast Asian Community Center
Held at the Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation
San Jose, California
May 17, 2008**

Question 1

1. Which of the following strategies should be a higher priority?	
A. Spending transportation funds to maintain the existing system of roads and the existing bus, rail and ferry services in the region	9
B. Spending transportation funds to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services in the region	7

Comments:

Roads and access are important; you would spend more money to build new roads than to maintain systems that already exist (also mentioned carpooling)

Safety is number one and keeping roads and buses and rail not falling apart is important (especially if we don't have enough money) – if we had enough money, we could do both because expansion is good, too (with more population need growth and access)

In our area light rail is good, but not enough people use it; also, during the rainy season things break and we need to repair the system

Urban area is expanding – need more cross connectors – need to widen roads like 84

We already have maintenance funds, so perhaps these funds should be spent towards expansion – to reduce emissions public transportation is important and expansion (like BART from San Jose to Fremont) is important

Question 2

2. How much of the \$30 billion dollar budget should be spent on maintaining local streets and roads, state highways, and public transit systems?	
A. Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion)	5
B. Up to 50% (\$15 billion)	9
C. Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion)	1
D. 100% (\$30 billion)	1

Comments:

A, already have other funds dedicated to maintenance – 25% is enough

Thinking about next 25 years, we need more new things in the future – will be more traffic, people and cars in the future

B, should have a balance (50/50)

Question 3

3. If you didn't spend all \$30 billion dollars on maintenance projects, where would you spend the rest of the funds?

Comments:

Need more bus service (mentioned Muni as a guide)

Need BART extension to San Jose

There are higher gas prices right now – cheaper to take a bus for a whole month than to fill your car – better to improve transit systems (bus, rail)

I would spend all 100% to maintain roads; would spend more funds on roads

I lived in Norway where all families had only one car and everyone took the bus; less dependent on cars – need more transit service and need to find ways to encourage people to take transit

Concerned about global warming – should focus on emissions reduction

Agree with that statement – need to reduce emissions

Montague traffic is terrible – need congestion reduction (maybe add more lanes)

Need inland public transportation (high speed rail)

I would spend 50% on maintenance (roads and fixing what we have); would spend the rest on improving access to public transportation and lowering fees/fares (this would also help in reducing emissions)

Question 4

4. Which of the following projects should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system?	
A. Spending transportation funds on the highway system to relieve traffic congestion, including ramp metering, high-occupancy toll lanes, etc.	10
B. Spending transportation funds on public transit options, including rail and buses to provide alternatives to driving	6
C. Spending transportation funds on walking paths and bicycle lanes to provide alternatives to driving	0

Comments:

Like HOT lanes idea

Wants to keep roads clear of congestion (doesn't use bus or rail)

Need to make sure there are auxiliary lanes in case of emergencies on ALL roads (had friends who were killed because there was no extra lane)

Highway 152 has terrible traffic – very scary – one-lane only (connector to I-5)

B, we still need to have public transportation for everybody and depend on our cars less

Need to spend more money on rail systems (especially along freeway corridors)

By choosing B, you also solve the problems listed in A.

C, went to Europe a few years ago, where people ride bikes and walk and take buses – we need to encourage people here to do this more – maybe this is a radical idea now, but we need to start thinking about it now – those countries are also healthier

Possibly for short distances, but in the Bay Area where things are spread out, we need public transit, too

(A comment/rebuttal to above statement: Maybe we need to locate things closer together to make it easier to get to – also mentioned living near where she works as possible future issue)

Question 5

5. What's the one improvement that could be made to public transportation that would increase ridership?
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Comments:

Make public transit accessible, cheap and fast

Provide incentives to riding transit (like getting sponsors to add perks – like Safeway giving free groceries to those who purchase transit tickets)

Increase frequency and make sure it's a consistent schedule

Extend BART to San Jose (south San Jose) – and make rail service all the way to L.A.

Find ways to motivate people to use the light rail – maybe have a public awareness campaign; also need to make more carpool lanes

Change routes on the systems so they're more direct (better connectivity)

Need transit in closer proximity to my home; need better connectivity; need system to be more frequent (it's a time issue for him)

Transit needs to be cheap, fast, and accessible

Question 6

6. Which of the following should be a higher priority?	
A. Providing more transportation funds to communities that are planning to build more housing along BART and other public transit lines	10
B. Providing transportation funds evenly to communities regardless of where they are planning to build homes	6

Comments:

A, can save time and it's easier

Would help poor people to live closer to BART/train; would also help alleviate traffic on roads; feels building closer to bus lines for poorer people would be good, too; could also build the bus/train by the community and the community by the train/bus

Can walk to work – would help traffic – doesn't have to sit in traffic

B, crime is an issue (although it might be less because of who lives there – it would be easier for people to ride a train to get to the TOD to rob people who live there)

Need to build more parking lots for public transit

Would give benefit to the community (benefit more people)

Not economically possible for everyone to move into those homes near transit (some might not be able to afford) – and doesn't see the benefit from this

Question 7

7. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: <i>"There should be a subsidy for low-income riders."</i>	
A. Strongly Agree	12
B. Agree	3
C. Neutral	0
D. Disagree	0
E. Strongly Disagree	1

Comments:

A, I work with some low-income people and I see the impact

Low-income people need support

B, I agree, but not strongly; sooner or later low-income people will be trying to own a car and get more independence

Question 8

8. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: <i>"I favor basing all transit fare subsidies on income rather than age or disability."</i>	
A. Strongly Agree	3
B. Agree	1
C. Neutral	3
D. Disagree	4
E. Strongly Disagree	5

Comments:

D, if we can provide for seniors, disabled and youth and don't have enough money, we should leave the subsidy this way – these are the people who need the most help

E, I support a low-income subsidy, but also support seniors, youth, etc.

It should still be the current system, but also allow some low-income to apply for it (but not take precedence over the current system)

Question 9

9. Which of the following should be a higher priority?	
A. Reducing tailpipe emissions and encouraging alternatives to driving, such as public transit, bicycling, walking, etc.	8
B. Reducing traffic congestion and improving traffic flow to make it easier to drive around the Bay Area	8

Comments:

Selecting A means that you also get B (also relieve the stress of driving)

Will help global warming – should have more of a campaign to increase awareness

Would like to see public transit for everyone

There will be more traffic, people, and cars in the future – need to address that

B, people like to drive their own cars – we need to improve traffic flow and congestion

People will choose to drive, so we need to solve the problem from that perspective

Less stop and go traffic means fewer emissions from the tailpipe

I would choose both A and B, but lean a little more towards B – people will use their personal car, but the future needs to focus on improving transit and making it better

Question 10

10. Which programs do you think are most effective to reduce the amount of emissions? (Select as many as you think will reduce emissions.)	
A. Subsidize purchase of newer/cleaner vehicles	8
B. Provide more/cheaper public transit	10
C. Develop awareness campaign to encourage people to reduce fossil fuel use	6
D. Build more bike paths and sidewalks	1
E. Funding incentives to cities to allow more development near transit	3
F. Support local traffic signal timing coordination	10

Comments:

A, but subsidize cleaner cars, not new cars

This makes sense

It's a trickle-down effect (Ford and Chevy are now making hybrids)

Need to develop incentives to get older cars off the road

Maybe do a campaign to have people ride bikes once a week – we should make paths more inviting (more trees)

F:, will help traffic to flow better and reduce emissions

Also law enforcement should pay more attention to vehicles emitting lots of smog

Question 11

11. How much of the \$30 billion dollar budget should be spent on maintaining local streets and roads, state highways, and public transit systems?	
A. Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion)	4
B. Up to 50% (\$15 billion)	10

C. Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion)	1
D. 100% (\$30 billion)	1

Question 12

12. Thinking ahead to the year 2035, if you had \$30 billion, how much would you spend on each of the following projects to prepare for our regional transportation needs? To make it simpler, let's change the \$30 billion to \$30. Out of the \$30, please fill in the dollar amount you would spend for each area.	
A. Maintenance of existing roads and systems	\$173
B. Relief of traffic congestion	\$88
C. Provide transportation funds to cities that develop housing near transit	\$28
D. Provide access to public transit systems for all Bay Area residents	\$109
E. Reducing automobile emissions	\$78

Comments:

Would also add 5 for marketing for environmental issues (probably heard this wrong, since it doesn't add up)

Question 13

13. Now that we've done the budget, would you favor pursuing new revenues to increase the funding?	
A. Yes	15
B. No	1

Comment:

One person said he doesn't want to pay (but he says he's a college student)

Question 14

14. Which of the following new revenue sources would you support? (Multiple answers are okay.)	
A. Regional gas fee	0
B. Higher bridge toll	0
C. Road tolls	0
D. Vehicle registration fees	7
E. County transportation sales taxes	1
F. Other new revenues	13
G. No new fees or increases	1

Comments:

Vehicle Reg Fee is tax deductible

County transportation sales tax so we can get BART to San Jose

Taxes on alcohol and tobacco and guns and gambling and entertainment

Carpool violation fines (using Fastrak technology to scan licenses and send tickets)